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HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0609

August 31, 2017

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The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Leahy:

As the Senate Appropriations Committee continues to advance appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), we urge your support for programs that address the unregulated and emerging water contaminant per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These chemicals are components of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), a firefighting agent used by the military services and civilian entities, and are being detected in drinking water sources across the nation.

In 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established new lifetime health advisories for two PFAS known as PFOA and PFOS. The Department of Defense (DOD) has already identified approximately 400 installations with a known or suspected release of PFOS/PFOA that requires additional investigation. While the risks associated with PFAS exposure are still being uncovered, studies have linked these chemicals to developmental effects, cancer and immune system dysfunction. Residents of our states are concerned about exposure to these chemicals, and what this means for their health and safety.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY18 (S.1519), as passed by the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), authorizes a study led by the Centers for Disease Control, with support from the EPA and DOD, on the health effects, and cumulative impact of PFAS contamination in drinking water, groundwater, and other relevant exposure pathways. We request the Committee include the necessary funding for such a study.

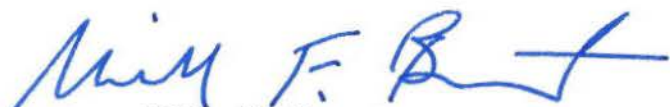
The scope of contamination is also just beginning to be understood. DOD is conducting preliminary site inspections in some areas and residents are eagerly awaiting remediation and water treatment efforts. Nationwide, DOD officials have suggested that clean up costs could reach as high as \$2 billion. We urge the Committee to include language directing DOD and the military services to budget robustly for assessment, investigation, and remediation activities in the upcoming fiscal years.

Additionally, the SASC-passed NDAA FY18 authorizes increased funding for the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program and the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program to address the safety and welfare of servicemembers and their dependents by eliminating the current generation of contaminants and by reducing the cost of remediation

efforts. We urge you to include similar investments, including for research into firefighting alternatives that do not contain PFAS and that meet military specification performance standards.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to working closely with you on this issue.

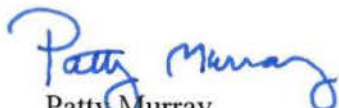
Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



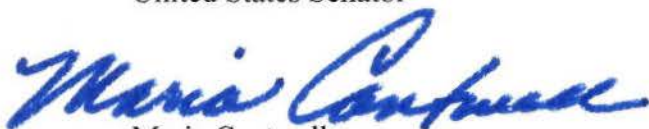
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United States Senator



Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator